

OSMP - Environmental Education Programs For Schools and Community Groups

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Environmental Education Programs

For Schools & Community Groups

Click to jump down to these topics:

- »Frequently Asked Questions
- »Program Topic List
- »Naturalist-led Programs
- »Program Request Form
- »Leading your Own Hike
- »Creek Critters Puppet Show
- »Kids' Fun Pages (Great downloadable resources)
- »Online Resources & Learning Hub

"Good teaching is one-fourth preparation

and three-fourths theater."

--Gail Godwin

From Flagstaff Mountain to Sombrero Marsh, from Chautauqua Meadow to Doudy Draw, there are natural treasures to be found. The lands of Open Space and Mountain Parks contain the Flatiron formations, forests, prairies, wetlands, and abundant wildlife. We encourage educators and community members to take advantage of this outdoor classroom and the services provided free by Open Space and Mountain Parks staff. We are happy to help you in any way we can. Send us email at Environmental Education Programs, eeprograms@bouldercolorado.gov, or call 720-564-2083 for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much do programs cost? Nothing! Open Space & Mountain Parks offers these programs free of charge as a community service, supported by City of Boulder sales tax. To pay for your program, shop in Boulder. Exception: For-profit corporations will be charged a fee of \$200 per naturalist to cover operational costs.

How large a group can I bring? Classroom programs have no upper limit, hikes are limited to 60 participants. If you plan to bring your own group without an OSMP guide, you may need a permit (follow this link).

Do programs align with Colorado's State Model Content standards? Yes! Most of our programs align with Science Standards 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, or 4.1. Other specific programs align with other standards in science, history and geography.

How do I sign up? E-mail us the Program Request Form on this website or call 720-564-2083 to request a form in the mail. It will take us several weeks to process your request, at which time we will email you a confirmation if we can accommodate you.

How far in advance must I sign up? We recommend 2 to 4 weeks, more during busy months (April - June, September-October).

How often can I sign up? Please, no more than two programs per group or class per year.

Are programs offered in Spanish? Yes! Be sure and specify this option when you register.

May I bring students with special needs? Our naturalists have no special training to work with children with special needs. You must bring an aide or assistant who is familiar with the children.

Are programs only for schools? Scout groups, adult classes, church groups, community clubs and organizations are all welcome and will not be charged for programs.

Are there age limits on the group? Pre-school to infinity.

Must we observe park rules on our trip? Yes. Please familiarize yourself and your group with Open Space and Mountain Parks rules and regulations before your trip.

Do you have online resources for educators? Yes! Visit our E Learning Hub for a ever-growing selection of resources to help you plan classes, workshops, and activities. Download information and activities for geology, flora, fauna, and history.

Naturalist-led Programs and Hikes

Open Space and Mountain Parks staff and volunteers provide free hikes in the park and slide shows and talks in the classroom. We have been committed to providing quality environmental education and interpretation for over 25 years. Our programs are intended to instill respect and appreciation for the natural environment and encourage conservation-minded decision making. We want your experience with us to be a memorable one. Please see the list of program topics provided by Open Space and Mountain Parks. These topics may be tailored to meet the needs of your group. The more

information you can provide on your curriculum needs and lesson planning, the better we can integrate your learning experience in the Park. For more information or to receive a request form by mail, call 720-564-2083. Or use the Request form on this website.

Please register at least 2-4 weeks in advance.

You can request hikes and programs for any day except holidays. April through June and September are busy months; we appreciate if you can schedule at other times.

Many programs can be presented in the classroom. Let us bring open space to you!

For hikes, small groups are preferable. However, we understand that scheduling and transportation may dictate your group size, and we will do our best to accommodate hiking groups of up to 60. We strive to maintain a ratio of 15 participants per naturalist, hence we will divide large groups between several guides.

We offer programs in Spanish.

Participants with disabilities or special needs must be accompanied by a trained aide or teacher familiar with the any special requirements.

Creek Critters Puppet Show

Boulder's Water Quality Outreach also offers excellent free programs for teachers, including the hilarious Creek Critters Puppet Show. Follow along the Boulder Creek Watershed from the high mountain streams to the confluence with the St. Vrain. Learn why clean water is important to Boulder Creek Critters and how you can help protect and conserve water. Follow this link to learn how you can bring the Creek Critters to your classroom.

Leading Your Own Nature Hike

If you wish to take a hike without a park naturalist, the following guidelines will help ensure an enjoyable experience with minimal impact to the environment:

Starting January 1, 2007, OSMP will require a Special Use Permit for all school visits by educational groups with 50 or more participants, except for OSMP-sponsored educational field trips. Please make every effort to apply at least 14 days in advance.

Educational groups with between 25 and 49 participants can get an exemption from the permit if they notify OSMP. Try to give us at least 14 days before their trip. OSMP will check if the field trip site can support the group, and send low impact guidelines for you to follow.

An educational group must be part of a curricular school activity; this includes non-competitive or training athletic activities, and before or after school activities, as long as they are related to regular school programming. It does not include clubs or camps. Competitive athletic activities are not allowed.

Special Use Permits are free at www.osmppermits.org. Please try to apply 14 days before your trip to give us time for review, and for you to receive your permit.

Outside organizations that are using school facilities and are charging a fee, receiving money for a service or require a donation, and operate on OSMP lands, are required to get a Commercial Use Permit (visit www.osmppermits.org for details).

Please direct your questions to osmppermits@bouldercolorado.gov or call Lisa Nieman at 720-564-2007.

10-15 minute Welcome Talks by an OSMP naturalist are available upon request and strongly encouraged.

We also encourage you to design your curriculum before your trip to maximize educational benefits. We are happy to assist in any way we can. Come on a pre-hike visit to the park if possible, or explore this web-site to get acquainted with the area.

For inspiration and ideas, visit our E Learning Hub for a ever-growing selection of resources to help you plan. Download information and activities for geology, flora, fauna, and history.

Download [Common Ground](#) (a guide to exploring your home) (630.85 KB). This guide contains many thought provoking activities and questions that can enrich a field trip.

Download puzzles and word searches to share with children. Visit our [Kids'Pages](#) to see what is available.

Familiarize your group with park rules and regulations before your trip. A copy of these regulations and a free map can be mailed to you upon request.

Send us email at Environmental Education Programs, eeprograms@bouldercolorado.gov, or call 720-564-2083 for more information.